



PLANNING & BUILDING SERVICES

STREET TREES & SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE

GENERAL INFORMATION

This brochure is intended to inform property and business owners about basic City requirements for street trees and sidewalks in order to ensure that safe and efficient access and circulation for pedestrians and vehicles is maintained, while protecting our valuable urban canopy and our Tree City USA status. Elements of the natural and built environment maintain and protect property values, enhance the City's appearance and character, and visually unify the City and its neighborhoods. By promoting proper plant selection and providing for continuous maintenance, the City's street trees can flourish and through a cooperative effort, the extensive City trail system can be utilized year round.

This handout serves as a brief overview on Street Trees and Sidewalk Maintenance, for more information on specific requirements, please refer to the City of Liberty Lake Municipal Code.

MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

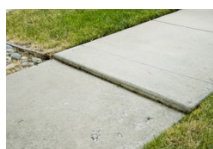
Obstructions to sidewalks, streets, and other rights of way.

It is the responsibility of the abutting property owner to keep the adjacent rights of way free of anything that obstructs or interferes with the normal flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic, unless specifically authorized by ordinance to do otherwise. This responsibility includes, but is not limited to, removal of earth, rock, and other debris, as well as projecting or overhanging bushes and limbs that may obstruct or render unsafe the passage of persons or vehicles.

- Sidewalks - Must be maintained in a safe condition at all times by removing snow and ice, or any accumulation of debris, materials or objects where the same endangers or interferes with the public convenience in the use of such sidewalks. All sidewalks must be clear of obstructions by earth, rock, or vegetation from edge to edge and to an elevation of 7.5' feet above sidewalk level.

Examples:

- Bushes that encroach on or over any part of a sidewalk area must be cut back or removed.
- Limbs of trees that project over the sidewalk area at an elevation of less than 7.5' feet above the sidewalk level must be removed.
- Sidewalk damage must be repaired in consultation with the City Engineer.



- Streets - All improved streets must be clear of obstructions to vehicle movement and parking from edge to edge and to an elevation of 13' 6" above street level.

Examples:

- Bushes that encroach on or over any part of a street must be cut back or removed.
- Limbs of trees that project over a street at an elevation of less than 13' 6" above street level must be removed.
- No wires or other things shall be maintained over the street level at any elevation less than 13' 6".
- Alleys and Unimproved Rights-of-Way - All alleys, unimproved streets, and other public rights of way must be clear of obstructions that may hinder the normal flow of traffic or render the right of way unsafe for its current and necessary use.



Pruning Techniques

Per the City Tree Ordinance, if you are hiring someone to prune, treat, or remove a street tree, a licensed Arborist must be utilized. Arborists have the experience and training necessary to properly shape the street trees and damage that can be caused to street trees by inexperienced pruners can be irreparable so it is recommended to utilize a licensed Arborist. The City is providing the following information to assist property and business owners with basic pruning techniques for preservation of the City's urban canopy.

• Small Branches -

For 1" or smaller use a hand shears.

Cut back to the joint as close as possible to prevent re-growth.



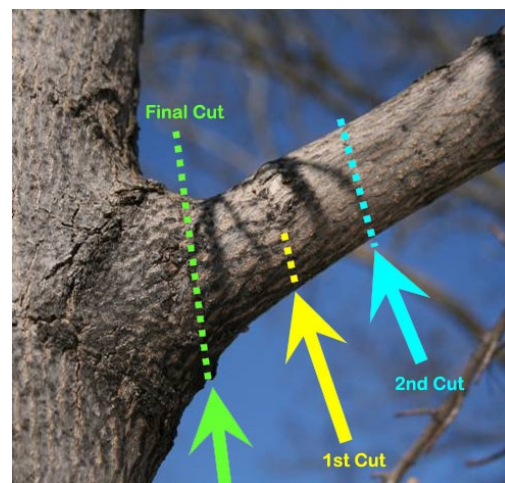
• Large Branches -

For 1" or larger use pruning saw.

Make 1st cut about halfway through the branch.

Make 2nd cut all the way through.

Then make the final cut.



Example of professionally pruned City of Liberty Lake street trees.



Tree Care

- Pruning Tips -
Don't worry about protecting pruning cuts.
Keep your tools sharp.
Light pruning and the removal of dead wood can be done anytime.
Pruning during dormancy (after leaves fall and before new growth appears) is best.
Do not prune any tree the same year it is planted or moved.
If many laterals must be removed, it is best to complete pruning in two or more sessions.
A licensed Arborist should be utilized for major pruning and to prune for strength and shape.
Pruning activities may require a Right-of-Way Permit (available on the City website or at City Hall).
- Tree Topping - Per the City Tree Ordinance, it is unlawful as a normal practice to top any street tree, park tree, or other tree on public property. Topping is defined as the severe cutting back of limbs to stubs larger than 3" in diameter within the tree's crown to such a degree as to remove the normal canopy and disfigure the tree. Street trees severely damaged by storms or other causes, or certain trees under utility wires or other obstructions where other pruning practices are impractical may be exempted. Please contact the City for more information at 509-755-6700.

Tree Care, continued

- Fertilizing - Trees should be fertilized in accordance with industry standards and specifications (ANSI 300). Please keep lawn fertilizers away from the drip line / edge of tree canopy.
- Cabling and Bracing - The installation of cabling and bracing tree support systems is a specialized practice and proper training and field experience are necessary to perform these treatments successfully and without damaging the tree. These treatments should be done in accordance with industry standards and specifications (ANSI 300).
- Irrigation - All street trees will require irrigation to become established and irrigation must be continued for any non drought tolerant tree variety. Drip irrigation is the preferred method when possible.
- Protection - It is very damaging to trees when anything is tacked into the bark of the tree or the trunk is hit by a string trimmer. If you must string trim grass around the tree, please utilize a trunk protector. If possible, a tree ring or other method should be utilized around the tree trunk to protect the tree from inadvertent damage.
- Removal and Replacement - The City must approve any street tree removal and a licensed Arborist should make the determination that a street tree must be removed due to death, disease or insects that cannot be controlled or removed and pose a risk to adjacent trees, a high risk of failure, or a tree that is classified as undesirable or currently prohibited as a street tree. Additionally, the City may schedule street tree replacement to upgrade the urban canopy. Per the City Tree Ordinance, if you are hiring someone to remove a street tree, a licensed Arborist must be utilized. A City Right-of-Way Permit will be needed prior to beginning work and the tree must be replaced by an approved street tree as determined by the City. Refer to Page 6 of this brochure for a list of approved City street trees and Pages 7 & 8 for more information on Landscape Conservation.

WSU Master Gardeners (www.spokane-county.wsu.edu) and Spokane County Conservation District (<http://www.sccd.org>) are additional resources for more information on proper tree care and planting.

STREET TREE SELECTION AND PLANTING

Street trees are required in most residential developments. Requirements for street tree planting strips are provided in the Development Code and the River District SAP-08-0001. Street tree installation shall be based on a landscape plan approved by the City as part of the development approval.

- **Growth Characteristics.** Trees shall be selected based on growth characteristics and site conditions, including available space, overhead clearance, soil conditions, exposure, and desired color and appearance. The following should guide tree selection:
 - Provide a broad canopy where shade is desired.
 - Use low-growing trees for spaces under utility wires.
 - Select trees which can be "limbed-up" where vision clearance is a concern.
 - Use narrow or "columnar" trees where awnings or other building features limit growth, or where greater visibility is desired between buildings and the street.
 - Use species with similar growth characteristics on the same block for design continuity.
 - Avoid using trees that are susceptible to insect damage, and avoid using trees that produce excessive seeds or fruit.
 - Select trees that are well-adapted to the environment, including soil, wind, sun exposure, and exhaust. Drought-resistant trees should be used in areas with sandy or rocky soil.
 - Select trees for their seasonal color, as desired.
 - Use deciduous trees for summer shade and winter sun.
 - Select trees that do not have invasive roots.

Caliper Size. The minimum caliper size at planting shall be 2 inches, based on the American Association of Nurserymen Standards.

Spacing & Location. Street trees shall be planted within existing and proposed planting strips, and in sidewalk tree wells on streets without planting strips. The use of grass in street tree planters is discouraged and if necessary, shall only be utilized in a manner approved by the City. Street tree spacing shall be based upon the type of tree(s) selected and the canopy size at maturity.

- **Street Tree Spacing.** The spacing of street trees will be in accordance with the three species size classes listed below, and no trees may be planted closer than the following:
 - Small Trees - 30 feet
 - Medium Trees - 40 feet
 - Large Trees - 50 feet
 - Exceptions - special plantings designed or approved by a landscape professional.
- **Distance from Curb and Sidewalk.** The distance trees may be planted from curbs or curblines and sidewalks will be in accordance with the three species size classes listed below, and no trees may be planted closer to any curb or sidewalk than the following:
 - Small Trees - 2 feet
 - Medium Trees - 3 feet
 - Large Trees - 4 feet

The City may require increased distances from curbs and/or sidewalks on Arterial and Collector streets to accommodate snow removal and vertical clearances.
- **Distance from Street Corners and Fire Hydrants.** No street tree shall be planted closer than the spacing requirements identified above to any crosswalk, stop sign, point of curvature of intersection curblines, or point of tangency of intersection curblines. No street trees shall be planted closer than 10 feet of any fire hydrant.
- **Utilities.** No street trees other than small trees may be planted under or within 10 lateral feet of any overhead utility wire, or over or within 5 lateral feet of any underground water line, sewer line, transmission line, or other utility.
- **Soil Preparation, Planting, and Care.** The developer or abutting property owner, as applicable, shall be responsible for ensuring the planting of street trees, including soil preparation, ground cover material, staking, and temporary irrigation for two years after planting. The developer or abutting property owner, as applicable, shall also be responsible for ensuring the tree care (pruning, watering, fertilization, and replacement as necessary) during the first two years after planting. All trees shall be maintained and cared for in accordance with City ORDINANCE NO. 124, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LIBERTY LAKE, WASHINGTON, ESTABLISHING A CITY TREE ORDINANCE, as amended. Note: if at any time a street tree is substantially damaged by a vehicle or other means, it shall be the responsibility of the person causing the damage to replace the tree with one of similar species and size. Contact the City of Liberty Lake for additional information on street tree planting, pruning, and replacement.

Street Tree List. The following list constitutes example street tree species for the City of Liberty Lake, Washington. The City of Liberty Lake is a Tree City USA and the program emphasizes native species and encourages species diversity. Similar trees may be used if permission is obtained by the Planning & Community Development Department.

Continued on Page 6

1. Small Trees (shall only be used where utility conflicts exist):

Crataegus x lavalleyi - Lavalley Hawthorne
Fraxinus excelsior 'Aureaefolia' - Golden Desert Ash
Fraxinus pennsylvanica 'Johnson' – Leprechaun Ash
Malus x 'Spring Snow' – Spring Snow Crabapple
Prunus cerasifera 'Thundercloud' - Thundercloud Flowering Plum

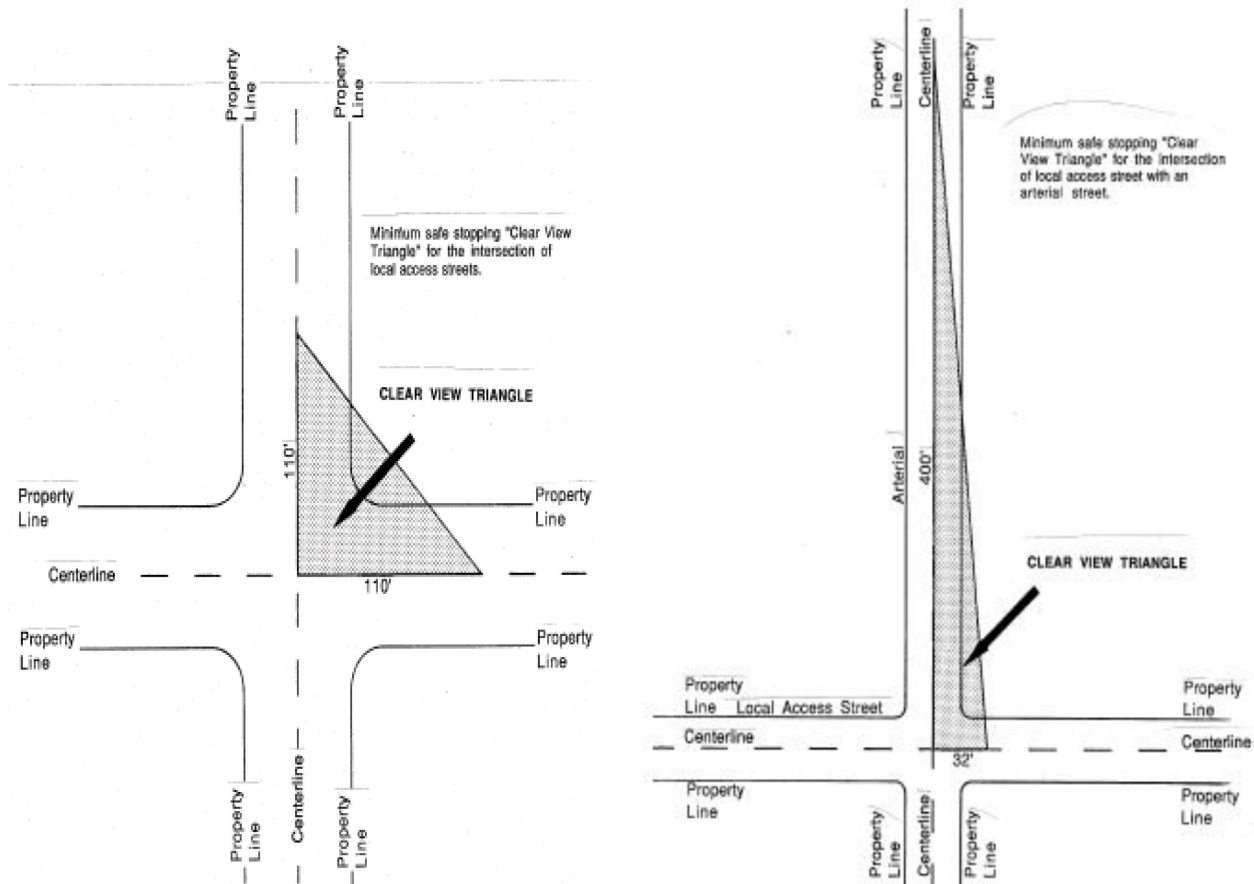
2. Medium to Large Trees:

Acer x freemanii 'Autumn Blaze' - Autumn Blaze Maple
Acer griseum - Paperbark Maple
Acer platanoides 'Crimson King' - Crimson King Norway Maple
Acer platanoides 'Deborah' - Deborah Maple
Acer platanoides 'Emerald Queen' - Emerald Queen Norway Maple
Acer rubrum 'Autumn Flame' – Autumn Flame Maple
Acer rubrum 'October Glory' - October Glory Red Maple
Acer rubrum 'Red Sunset' - Red Sunset Red Maple
Acer saccharum 'Commemoration' - Commemoration Sugar Maple
Acer truncatum x *Acer platanoides* 'Norwegian Sunset' - Norwegian Sunset Maple
Acer truncatum x *platanoides* "Warrenred" - Pacific Sunset Maple
Cercidiphyllum japonicum - Katsura Tree
Fraxinus pennsylvanica "Patmore" - Patmore Ash
Fraxinus pennsylvanica 'Cimmaron' - Cimmarron Ash
Ginkgo biloba 'Autumn Gold' - Maidenhair Tree / Autumn Gold Ginkgo
Gleditsia triacanthos 'Shademaster' - Shademaster Thornless Honeylocust
Gleditsia triacanthos 'Skycole' - Skyline Thornless Honeylocust
Liquidambar styraciflua 'Moraine' - Moraine American Sweetgum
Parrotia persica – Persian Parrotia
Platanus x acerifolia 'Bloodgood' - Bloodgood London Plane Tree
Pyrus calleryana 'Autumn Blaze' - Autumn Blaze Pear
Pyrus calleryana 'Aristocrat' - Aristocrat Pear
Pyrus calleryana 'Holmford' - New Bradford Pear
Pyrus calleryana 'Redspire' – Redspire Pear
Quercus palustris - Pin Oak
Quercus rubra - Red Oak
Tilia americana 'Redmond' – Redmond Linden
Tilia cordata 'Greenspire' – Greenspire Linden
Tilia tomentosa 'Sterling' – Sterling Silver Linden



CLEAR VIEW TRIANGLE

No signs or structures, or vegetation in excess of three feet in height shall be placed in "vision clearance areas" or "clear view triangle", as described and shown below. The minimum vision clearance area may be increased by the Community Development Director upon finding that more sight distance is required (i.e., due to traffic speeds, roadway alignment, etc.). Vision clearance standards shall be based on the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards. The following examples are based on a typical single family home situation.



LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION

The use of mature, native vegetation within developments is a preferred alternative to removal of vegetation and re-planting. Mature landscaping provides summer shade and wind breaks, and allows for water conservation due to larger plants having established root systems.

Significant Trees and Shrubs - All trees within the public right of way with a trunk diameter of 12 inches or greater, as measured 4 feet above the ground (DBH - diameter at breast height), and all plants within the drip line of such trees and shrubs, as well as critical area vegetation shall be protected in accordance with the City Development Code. Additionally, individual trees and shrubs with a trunk diameter of 12 inches or greater should be protected, if practical. Other trees may be deemed significant, when nominated by the property owner or City staff and designated by the City Council as "Heritage Trees" (i.e., by virtue of site, rarity, historical significance, etc.).

Mapping and Protection Required. All significant trees within the right of way and all Heritage Trees shall be mapped individually and identified by species and size (diameter at 4 feet above grade, or “DBH”). A “protection” area shall be defined around the edge of all branches (drip-line) of each tree (drip lines may overlap between trees). The City also may require an inventory, survey, or assessment prepared by a qualified professional when necessary to determine vegetation boundaries, building setbacks, and other protection or mitigation requirements. Other significant vegetation should be identified as existing vegetation on required landscape plans with their size and species, if the trees will be preserved as a portion of the required landscaping.

Protection Standards. All of the following protection standards shall apply to significant vegetation other vegetation should comply whenever practical:

1. Protection of Significant Vegetation - Significant vegetation shall be retained whenever practical, as determined by the City. Preservation may become impractical when it would prevent reasonable development of public streets, utilities, or land uses permitted by the applicable zoning district and relocation of the vegetation or replacement with equivalent vegetation with the closest DBH for trees or commercially available nursery size available in the Spokane/ Coeur d’Alene metro region shall be required within the development or if not possible, then relocated or replaced within another area in the City.
2. Protection of Natural Resource / Critical Areas - Natural Resource / Critical Areas shall be protected in conformance with the provisions of City Development Code Chapter 6.
3. Conservation Easements and Dedications - When necessary to implement the Comprehensive Plan, the City may require dedication of land or recordation of a conservation easement to protect specific areas, including groves of significant trees or Heritage Trees.

Construction. All areas of significant vegetation shall be protected prior to, during, and after construction. Grading and operation of vehicles and heavy equipment is prohibited within significant vegetation areas, except as approved by the City for installation of utilities or streets. Such approval shall only be granted after finding that there is no other reasonable alternative to avoid the protected area, and any required mitigation is provided in conformance with City Development Code Chapter 6 and the protection standards above.

Exemptions.

- **Dead, Diseased, and/or Hazardous Vegetation** - Vegetation that is dead or diseased, or poses a hazard to personal safety, property, or the health of other trees, may be removed. Prior to tree removal, the applicant shall provide a report from a certified arborist or other qualified professional to determine whether the subject tree is diseased or poses a hazard, and any possible treatment to avoid removal, except for emergencies as listed below.
- **Emergencies** - Significant vegetation may be removed in the event of an emergency when the vegetation poses an immediate threat to life or safety, as determined by the Community Development Director.





Please note that while every effort is made to assure the accuracy of the information contained in this brochure it is not warranted for accuracy. This document is not intended to address all aspects or regulatory requirements for a project and should serve as a starting point for your investigation.

For detailed information on a particular project, permit, or code requirement refer directly to applicable file and/or code/regulatory documents or contact the City of Liberty Lake Planning & Building Services.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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